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Explora Museum
Frankfurt exhibition challenges sleuths of all ages to solve optical puzzles. See page 15.



Soldier talent wanted
The deadline is quickly approaching to apply to audition for next year's Army Soldier Show. See page 27 for details.



Dexheim Biathlon
Athletes take on muddy challenge of 30-K cycle and foot race in the fields and vineyards near Anderson Barracks. See page 28.



Herald Union



Vol. XII, No. 5

Serving the military communities of the 104th Area Support Group

Dec. 7, 2004

Festival of Lights

Soldiers, civilians reflect on being Jewish in the military

By David Ruderman
104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

When Jewish Soldiers and civilians light candles tonight to begin the eight-day celebration of Hanukkah, most of their gentile friends and comrades will remain in the dark about the event and the customs surrounding it. It's just one of the minor dissonances that come with being part of Jewish life in America at large and in the Army in particular.

"It's maybe not so unusual, but there's just such a low percentage of Jews in the military," said Chaplain (Capt.) Mordechai Schwab, of 1st Military Intelligence Battalion in Wiesbaden. "I think we number a little less than in the general society. The Army did a survey, I think in 2000, of the religious affiliation of everyone in the Army, and the Jews were about one-third of 1 percent."

Schwab is one of nine Jewish chaplains on active duty service, and joined the Army in part to bolster that force, he said.

"I was prior enlisted and felt a little isolated myself. You just didn't see many Jewish chaplains

around, and so I thought when I was ordained [as a rabbi] that I could take care of the Jewish Soldiers." Schwab received his ordination from Yeshiva University in 2001 and enlisted after the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

Being a minority in uniform is not exclusively a Jewish issue, he said.

"It's kind of difficult too for Soldiers because there's no chaplain for coverage of their specific faith group, whether you're Presbyterian, Muslim, Catholic or whatever group," he said. "Chaplains have the responsibility to the Soldiers in their unit."

"As a Jewish Soldier I think you have to maybe reach out a little more," said Jill Knaus, deputy S-3 with the 221st Base Support Battalion in Wiesbaden. Knaus was in uniform from 1998 to earlier this year, when she completed her last assignment as a captain with the 205th Military Intelligence Brigade. "If you're looking to attend services you have to look around, but I think that's just like any other minority."

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Photo by Karen Edge
Chaplain (Capt.) Mordechai Schwab lights a Hanukkah menorah at the Wiesbaden Army Airfield Chapel Annex.



Photo by Midori VanBrunt

Native Americans help celebrate Thanksgiving

Anna Higgins looks on raptly as White Eagle Dancer Jason Bender from Oklahoma performs a fancy dance during the Thanksgiving observance at the 16th Corps Support Group's Touch of Home Cafe Dining Facility on Hutier Kaserne. Soldiers and families were treated to a host of special events during Native American Heritage Month and Thanksgiving. See inside for more stories and photos.

Local units to inactivate

Several slated for June 2005

The Department of the Army has directed a series of initiatives to restructure its active force and rebalance forces between its active and reserve components. As part of this effort, the following 12 U.S. Army Europe units have been designated for inactivation in Fiscal Year 2005:

- 4-3rd Air Defense Artillery, 1st Infantry Division, at Larson Barracks, Kitzingen, to be inactivated Sept. 15, 2005.

- Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 41st Field Artillery Brigade, V Corps Artillery, at Babenhäuser Kaserne, Babenhäuser, to be inactivated July 15, 2005.

- D/E/F Troops of 1-4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division, at Conn

Barracks, in Schweinfurt, to be inactivated June 15, 2005.

- D/E/F Troops of 1-1st Cavalry, 1st Armored Division, at Armstrong Barracks, Büdingen, to be inactivated June 15, 2005.

- Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Aviation Brigade, V Corps, at Storck Barracks, Illesheim, to be inactivated Aug. 15, 2005.

- 503rd Chemical Detachment, V Corps, at Campbell Barracks, Heidelberg, to be inactivated June 15, 2005.

- 69th Chemical Company, 1st Armored Division, at Hutier Kaserne, Hanau, to be inactivated June 15, 2005.

- 55th Personnel Support Detachment C, 1st Personnel Command, at Ray Barracks, Friedberg, to be inactivated June 15, 2005.

The USAREUR chain of com-

mand has informed the Soldiers and family members of all affected units of these inactivations so they can be prepared for the change and be involved in the process.

USAREUR officials said they are concerned with the well-being of these Soldiers and their family members and will work to ensure their individual needs are met during this process.

Great care will be taken to move Soldiers and families during the summer months whenever possible, officials said.

Some units are currently deployed and upon their return will undergo unit reintegration and block leave before any inactivations occur.

The FY 2005 inactivations will affect approximately 1,000 Soldiers. However USAREUR's active duty

See Inactivate on page 3



Military Spouse Preference

In order to provide greater career opportunities for military spouses, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel implemented the Military Spouse Preference Choice program Oct. 7. MSP Choice permits military spouses to accept an unlimited number of temporary, intermittent or flexible schedule positions (non-continuing positions) without loss of their Military Spouse Preference.

Military spouses will be referred using MSP until such time as they accept a continuing position — positions to which appointments are made without time limitation and which are required to have a fixed part-time or full-time work schedule.

Upon acceptance of a non-continuing position, a spouse's eligibility for preference for other non-continuing positions will be suspended until 60 days before the expiration of the non-continuing position.

Military spouses who lost preference on or after the effective date of this policy change because they accepted or declined an offer of a time-limited position in the federal service, including NAF, would have preference reinstated. Reinstatement of preference is contingent on the spouse meeting all other applicable requirements for MSP.

Military spouses who previously accepted or declined a position with a fixed work schedule and no time limitation will not receive additional entitlement to MSP. Likewise, military spouses whose preference was terminated based on their refusal to participate in established competitive recruitment procedures will not have preference reinstated.

For more information contact Trina Schroeder at civ (0621) 487-2537. (Courtesy of USAREUR Public Affairs)

Bell Sends: Army Family Action Plan Conference raises issues of critical concern

By Gen. B.B. Bell
U.S. Army Europe commander



The Army held its 21st annual Army Family Action Plan Conference last month. At the conference 121 delegates discussed 96 complex, far-reaching Soldier and family-support issues vital to the well-being of the Army family, including entitlements, counseling services, employment and family support. In addition, commands outside the continental United States were able to submit issues of critical concern directly to the AFAP program.

U.S. Army Europe submitted the following two issues:

◆ **Funding for Department of Defense Dependents Schools Summer School for Kindergarten through 12th-Grade.** DODDS students should have the opportunity to attend summer school tuition-free.

◆ **Calculation of Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance OCONUS.** Housing and utility allowances from FSSA calculations should be eliminated.

The main theme of this year's conference continued to be personal financial concerns. Of the 96 new issues discussed (available at www.armycommunityservice.org/vacs_afap/home.asp), the top five were related to medical care, personal expenses and leave. These issues, in priority order, are as follows:

◆ **Family Member Eyeglass Coverage.** No eyeglass coverage exists under Tricare for family members of active-duty Soldiers and retirees. Delegates recommended funding part of the cost for eyeglasses under Tricare, outsourcing eyeglass fabrication through contracted vendors at a reduced price and having military laboratories provide Frame of Choice Program services at cost.

◆ **Expiration of Tricare Referral Authorizations.** Tricare automatically cancels the initial referral authorization when the beneficiary is unable to get an appointment with a specialty clinic or provider within the 28-day standard. Delegates recommended eliminating the automatic expiration of the initial Tricare referral authorization.

◆ **Child Care Fee Category.** Families with significantly different incomes are paying the same fee in each child care category. Delegates recommended increasing the number of categories to reduce the financial variance within each category and increasing the number of fee ranges to reflect the new categories while maintaining existing fee-range parameters.

◆ **Calculation of CONUS Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance.** Families stationed in CONUS generally do not qualify for FSSA because the calculation method includes Basic Allowance for Housing. Delegates recommended eliminating BAH from income calculations for FSSA.

◆ **Leave Accrual.** Increased mission requirements leave little opportunity for Soldiers to use accrued leave. Delegates recommended allowing Soldiers to carry up to 90 days of leave until their Expiration Term of Service.

The concentration on financial concerns affected the emphasis given to previously submitted issues and those being worked. The top six active AFAP issues (in addition to those above) include:

◆ Allowing Soldiers with 10 years of service to distribute their Montgomery GI Bill benefits to their family members. This was also priority No. 1 in 2003.

◆ Giving "in-state tuition" status to family members attending school in a U.S. state while residing in that state on military orders. This was priority No. 2 in 2003.

◆ Amending the enlisted portion of the Permanent-Change-of-Station weight-allowance table to

more closely match officer weight-allowance authorizations. This was priority No. 4 in 2003.

◆ Awarding household goods moving contracts to companies based on company performance, claims history and cost; and providing the full-replacement value for lost or damaged goods. This was priority No. 6 in 2003.

◆ Providing authorizations and funding for all Army Community Service positions in support of well-being initiatives that support Army Community Service. This is a new issue.

◆ Providing Reserve Component Soldiers on active duty full BAH after 30 days and paying Reserve Component Soldiers on active duty for over 140 days the full BAH from the first day of activation. This is a new issue.

The grassroots AFAP process has identified Soldier and family issues to senior leaders since 1983 and has raised over 525 issues that resulted in legislative or policy changes, and improved programs and services. Your suggestions and involvement are critical to this process. I strongly encourage you to participate in the AFAP to help make our great Army even better. Contact your base support battalion for more details on the AFAP process.

More reader feedback on travel to Cuba

Your response regarding travel to Cuba (Nov. 23 edition of the *Herald Union*, page 2) was inaccurate at best. The original article (Aug. 17 edition, page 5) was intended for Department of Defense personnel and some of our restrictions differ from the <http://travel.state.gov> website.

Guantanamo Bay is not considered part of Cuba for travel. It is a U.S. military installation. You do not fly there via Havana.

All DoD military and civilian personnel are required to submit a special travel form to the DoS and SECDEF/USDP Admin before travel to Cuba. The form is very long and tedious and each one is decided on

a case-by-case basis as to whether it merits consent. Personnel born in Cuba or who have close personal relatives in Cuba can go once a year with special permission and a special license, but it should be noted the if you are Cuban born, Cuba does not consider you a U.S. citizen — your passport can be confiscated and you are not allowed access to consular service. You can also be required to perform duties of a Cuban citizen such as military service with no support from the U.S. government. That is the risk you assume. There are other requirements for DoD personnel to visit relatives in Cuba that are not addressed on the State Department website. If the website was the end

all and be all for travel for DoD employees, S2s' jobs would be easier; it's only a guideline for U.S. citizens. But as DoD employees we often have other restrictions that are not the same for ordinary citizens. This is a very important difference. Failure to point this out in your response could cause someone a great deal of difficulty because they might think the website is the authority. It's a guideline.

While travel is possible, it is restricted, especially to DoD personnel. Travel is possible to any country anywhere, but as a DoD employee there are areas that you can't just visit because you want to. That was the point of the article.

Restricted countries are just that. You can go if you process all of the proper paperwork through Washington, get the special permits, required licenses, etc. You can't just get your leave request signed and go. Severe criminal penalties exist for those personnel who go without the proper authorization. Visiting a close relative in Cuba without all of the special authorizations required means your next vacation will be in jail if you're a DoD employee. And let's not even get into the problem of having a security clearance and traveling to Cuba — that would take a few more pages.

Robert Kentner
221st BSB S-2 information security specialist

Herald Union

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News and features

Newsflash

Memorial service for Hanau Soldier

A memorial service was held at Hanau's Pioneer Chapel Nov. 24 for Staff Sgt. Phillip E. Stanford Jr. Stanford, a physical security inspector for the 414th Base Support Battalion's Provost Marshal's Office, died Nov. 17 at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center after a lengthy bout with skin cancer. The 37-year-old former desk sergeant was born in Flint, Mich., and is survived by his mother Carrie Stanford-Dooley, brother Maurice Dooley and sisters Erica and Ursula Stanford.

Army Family Team Building awards

Kelly Gemin, an instructor for the 221st Base Support Battalion's Army Family Team Building program, was named the medium installation Instructor of the Year, and the 221st BSB's AFTB program was named medium installation Program of the Year by the Department of the Army. The winners will be recognized at a 10th birthday luncheon for the program in Greenville, S.C., Dec. 10. Winners were selected for their significant contributions over a sustained period of time, innovative approaches and inspirational leadership. AFTB is a volunteer-led organization aimed at providing "proactive, forward-thinking support for today's families and ensuring the strength of tomorrow's Army." (IMA-E Public Affairs)

V Corps safety hotlines

V Corps Soldiers who want to make a difference in their unit safety programs and help keep their fellow Soldiers safe can turn to two new hotlines. The Corps Accident Reduction Emphasis program, or CARE, allows Soldiers to share their views about accident prevention, to identify individual or unit hazards, and to make suggestions for program improvement. Soldiers who wish to share their views can call the CARE hotline at mil 370-6827 or civ (06221) 57-6827 and leave a recorded message with their comments — or send an email to CARE@hq.c5.army.mil. Program officials will respond to every call or email within 72 hours. To learn more about the CARE program visit the CARE web page at www.vcoprs.army.mil and click on the CARE logo. (V Corps Public Affairs)

New SOFA certificates

U.S. forces family members and civilian employees are reminded that they must obtain a new Status of Forces Agreement certificate from their local passport office by Jan. 15, 2005, if they will remain in Germany after that date. As of that date German officials will no longer recognize the rubber stamp entries or paper certificates issued in the past. Uniformed members of the U.S. forces in Germany do not need the SOFA certificates, nor do family members or civilian employees who possess an official passport with a SOFA stamp inside issued by the State Department. The official passport, also known as a "no-fee" passport because it was issued by the State Department at no cost to the individual, may be red or blue, but is marked "official." (IMA-E Public Affairs)

Gifts from the homefront

People wishing to support deployed service members can use the Army and Air Force Exchange Service's "Gifts from the Homefront" and "Help Our Soldiers Call Home" programs. Gifts from the Homefront certificates and phone cards allow deployed service members to purchase items at AAFES facilities around the world, including 51 exchanges serving Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom Soldiers, and to call home. The certificates and phone cards can be sent to a designated service member or distributed to "any service member" through the USO, American Red Cross, Air Force Aid Society or Fisher House. To purchase a certificate or phone card visit www.aafes.com. (AAFES-Release)



New council supports FRGs

V Corps initiative brings leaders together to ensure resources and assistance available when needed

By Staff Sgt. Manuel Torres-Cortes
V Corps Public Affairs Office

Those who look out for V Corps Soldiers and their families have a new ally — the V Corps Family Readiness Advisory Council.

The council, developed by corps senior family readiness leaders, met for the first time at Heidelberg's Patrick Henry Village Pavilion recently to increase and improve interaction between corps leadership and the corps' subordinate unit Family Readiness Groups. The council's intent is to use the combined knowledge and experience of family support groups throughout the corps to ensure resources and assistance are available to FRGs when and where they are needed most.

"The corps leadership needs the input from all of you so that we know what has to be done, to take care of our families throughout all of Germany," Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, V Corps commander, told FRG leaders in his opening remarks at the meeting. "You are truly important to our Soldiers and our readiness."

"First Armored Division and 1st Infantry Division experienced all the difficulties in dealing with family readiness issues (during their recent deployments), and they did an excellent job," Sanchez added. "We have to sustain this effort to care for families because by spring of next year, 40 percent of the corps will again be deployed."

Maj. Gen. Walter Wojdakowski, V Corps deputy commander, spoke about the realignment of forces in Europe and upcoming family readiness challenges, pledging his support to help FRGs prepare for future deployments and changes.

"First this corps has tremendous experience and expertise (in its family members) ... because virtually all our brigades and both divisions have deployed to the war and have redeployed. They have just done a magnificent job," said Wojdakowski. "Secondly (because) the corps is such a large and complex, dynamic organization, the leadership of the corps wants to make sure that the Family Readiness Group leaders and family members can get straight to the leadership in an expeditious manner when they need assistance, have good ideas, need resources or need questions answered."

The meeting allowed senior FRG leaders from units across the corps' major subordinate commands to foster teamwork and strong relationships, as well as to gain some new tools to help them communicate more consistently with each other.

Guest speaker Angela Crist took that communication capability even further, discussing interactive FRG tools available on the World Wide Web, particularly frg.army.mil, a website designed to facilitate sharing of information and



Photo by Staff Sgt. Manuel Torres-Cortes
Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, V Corps commander, praises the efforts of family readiness leaders during the V Corps council meeting.

ideas among FRG leaders worldwide. While the site is currently only accessible to users from computers within the military domain, Crist said there are plans to make it accessible to all computers.

Connecting FRG leaders from around the world in a vibrant conversation about solid leadership should increase the effectiveness of family readiness programs, and that should increase the effectiveness of units, she said.

"I am going to take a lot of this information and pass this along to my eight FRG leaders," said Robert L. Patton, family readiness support assistant for the corps' 18th Military Police Brigade.

Senior leader support of FRGs

Patton, whose brigade already has one unit deployed and one unit getting ready to go, said the VFRAC will provide an excellent forum for resolving issues quickly. "This is going to help out with redeployment and reintegration. This is a better avenue to voice our concerns and bring out any problems that we may have, that only the senior leadership can address," he said.

"The mere presence of the leaders here sends a huge message that family readiness is important," said Col. David K. MacEwen, V Corps personnel officer. "Although not every issue will be resolved to the satisfaction of every person, the corps is taking the time and is actively involved and very supportive of the V Corps Soldiers."

"The senior leadership is very committed to this," he said. "This is to maintain the focus, whether we are deployed or redeploying. I think it is a beginning of us formalizing the structure of overall family readiness of the corps ... having a structure in place that gives the units' FRGs someplace to link in the command group, to help pass information and best practices that can't be resolved at their level."

Inactivate

Continued from page 1

Soldier end-strength will remain at about 62,000. The primary initiative that will keep the end-strength at present day levels is the increasing of the remaining units' strength to what is referred to as "Authorized Level of Organization." In essence those units that were deliberately not manned at full required strength, commonly referred to as "low-ALO" units, will now be authorized 100 percent of their required strengths. This increase in Soldier assignments will compensate for most losses resulting from the inactivations.

A small number of U.S. and local national employees may be affected by this action, and supporting garrison functions may be reevaluated. Appropriate notification regarding personnel decisions will be made to the applicable works councils and employees in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements.

This action is a part of Army-wide force development

initiatives and not related to the current DoD Global Posture Review or EUCOM Strategic Theater Transformation.

The Department of Defense also announced recently that three recreation facilities and portions of two housing areas will be returned to the German government. This includes the Armed Forces Recreation Center's Patton and Von Steuben Hotels in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, the AFRC facility formerly operated at Lake Chiemsee and portions of the Birkenfeld (near Baumholder) and Daley-Village (in Bad Kissingen) housing areas.

In the same announcement DoD officials said that portions of the Germersheim Depot, slated earlier for return, will be retained as it is needed to support ongoing operations.

These actions have been under consideration for some time and are not tied to the recently announced review of U.S. forces overseas, known as the Global Posture Review, officials said. (Courtesy of USAREUR Public Affairs)

Army updates sexual assault policy

By Sgt. 1st Class Shaun Herron
Army News Service

New Army guidance on sexual assault prevention and response was released Nov. 12 and will be included in the upcoming revision of AR 600-20, Army Command Policy, in 2005, said officials.

The new guidance is one of several steps the Army has undertaken to re-emphasize that any offense of sexual assault is inconsistent with Army values and warrior ethos, they said.

Sexual assault prevention training will become part of initial entry training, semi-annual train-

ing, installation inprocessing and pre-deployment training for all Soldiers.

In addition to the new policy guidance for commanders, the Army has launched a website at www.sexualassault.army.mil to promote steps leaders and Soldiers at all levels can take to prevent and respond to instances of potential sexual assault.

Included on the website are links to training materials developed by the Training and Doctrine Command.

It also includes links to additional resources for victims of sexual assault and a checklist for commanders to help the recovery

of sexual assault victims.

The new website and incorporation of the new Army guidance into AR 600-20 reinforce the Army leadership's ongoing commitment to ensuring adequate prevention programs and policies are in place, said Col. Paris Mack, director of the Human Factors Division, Human Resources and Policy Directorate, G-1.

It also ensures Soldiers who are victims of sexual assault receive proper treatment, including both medical and psychological care. It will ensure that the chain of command provides full support, dignity and confidentiality to victims, and that any reported

incidents of assault will be "fully investigated and acted upon through the military criminal justice system," Mack said.

These efforts are the first steps at incorporating the recommendations of an Army task force that conducted a 90-day detailed review of the Army's policies and programs on sexual assault.

That task force issued an 80-page report with 24 recommendations to improve the system.

The task force sought advice from outside agencies including the Department of Veterans Affairs; the National Organization of Victim Assistance; Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Net-

work; the Miles Foundation; the Navy; the Coast Guard; the University of Arizona and Purdue University.

Both universities contributed insights from studies funded by grants from the Department of Justice for their own sexual assault prevention programs.

The age category for Soldiers who report sexual assaults and their assailants is strikingly similar to that of university students.

Nearly 84 percent of alleged Army perpetrators were identified as junior Soldiers, and 95 percent of victims were Soldiers in the rank of staff sergeant and below.

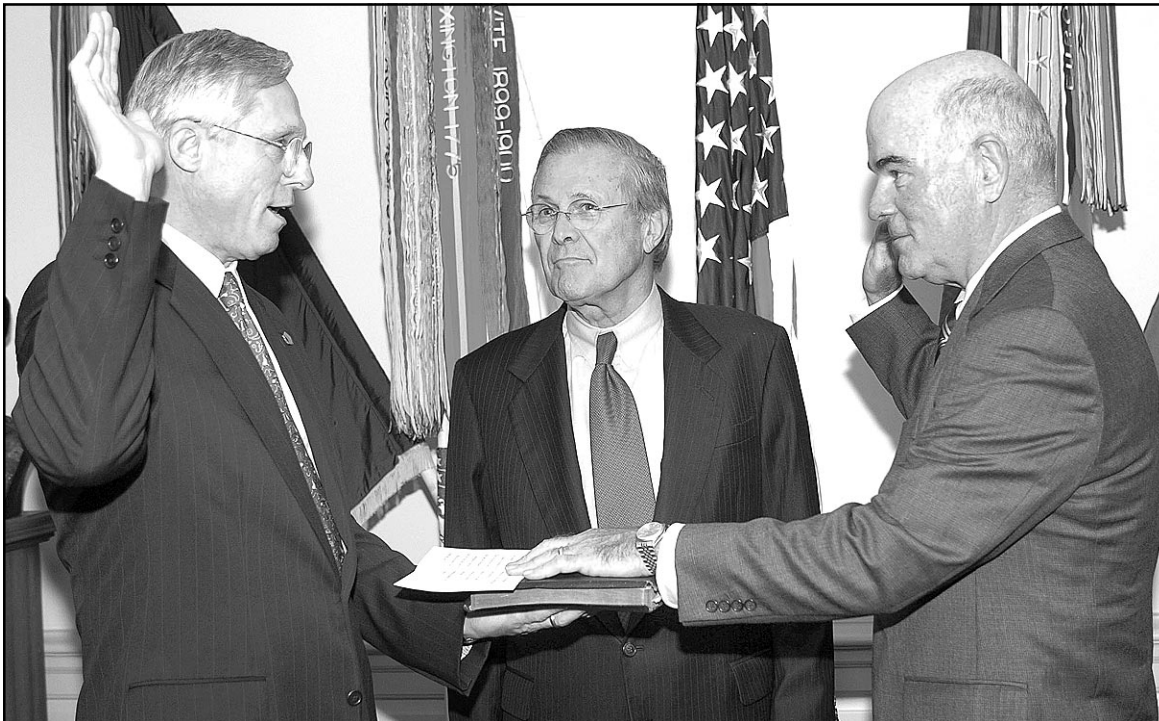


Photo by Staff Sgt. Carmen L. Burgess

Dr. Francis J. Harvey (right) is sworn in as the 19th secretary of the Army by Raymond DuBois, director of administration and management, as Donald Rumsfeld, secretary of defense, looks on.

New secretary sworn in

Dr. Francis J. Harvey was sworn in at the Pentagon Nov. 19 as the 19th secretary of the Army.

"This is a great honor for me," Harvey said. "My top priority will be to serve our Soldiers, civilian employees and family members of the active component, Army Reserve and Army National Guard. I look forward to working with the secretary of Defense, the Army chief of staff, Gen. Pete Schoomaker, and the Army senior leadership as we fight the Global War on Terrorism while continuing to transform the force."

The Senate confirmed Harvey's nomination Nov. 16.

"It's great to have Dr. Harvey on board as our secretary," said Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker, the Army chief of staff. "Dr. Harvey has a wealth of experience leading large organiza-

tions with diverse work forces, managing major programs and leading technology development. His education and industry experience will serve us well as he leads our Army in this window of strategic opportunity."

As secretary of the Army, Harvey is responsible for the department's annual budget of \$98.5 billion. He leads a work force of over one million active duty, Army National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers, 220,000 civilian employees and thousands of contractors. He also exercises stewardship over 15 million acres of land.

Before his appointment, Harvey was a business executive with broad experience centered on the defense industry. Most recently he was a director and vice chairman of Duratek, a company specializing in

treating radioactive, hazardous and other wastes.

Harvey holds a doctorate in metallurgy and material sciences from the University of Pennsylvania. He was a White House Fellow at the Department of Defense in the late 1970s.

Harvey succeeds Les Brownlee, who served as the acting secretary of the Army for the past 18 months.

"I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Secretary Les Brownlee for his leadership and stewardship of the Army over the past 18 months," Schoomaker said. "I speak for the entire Army family when I say his tireless efforts ... will have an impact on the Army and ensure we remain relevant and ready for decades to come." (Courtesy of the Army News Service)

Family togetherness focus of retreat

By Karen Edge
*221st Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office*

Members of the Hainerberg Chapel headed off to Hambachtal for a family retreat to recharge their batteries and learn the importance of each family in the congregation.

“We took individuals and plugged them back into their families and then we took the families

and plugged them back into the church family,” said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John Tidball. “It was the best retreat we’ve ever had.”

Unlike previous retreats where parents separate from their children and head off to a classroom environment and children to a day-care setting, every member of the family was involved in each event. Children got an opportunity to share how well they can do things and

parents had the chance to show they are more than disciplinarians and breadwinners.

Games were used to help break the ice, according to Jane Handley, one of the event organizers.

“We blindfolded more than 100 people and gave them a cutout of a body part. They then had to feel around the room to find the other people in their group of 10 who had the same body part,” she said.

The cut-out body parts were meant to symbolize the body of Christ. The exercise took people out of their comfort zone and made them feel a little vulnerable which in the end taught them how to trust one another, said Handley.

Another game, referred to as “diminishing resources,” helped team building. Groups were given a limited number of blocks and logs

and instructed to keep each member of the group off the ground.

“Eventually all of their resources were taken and they were left with only each other, and they all came up with unique ways to keep their teams off the ground,” said Handley.

Another method to help families reconnect was by having each member identify who they were as a family.

“Each family made a family crest that represented the respective family values, defined who they were and what they wanted others to see their family as,” said Tidball.

Tidball said his biggest hope for the retreat was for families to develop their own mission statements, not to just flow through the services, and to know how important they are to the church family.

“I think we’ve finally attained my biggest desire, which was to

transform from a chapel to a church,” Tidball said. “We’ve strengthened the body of Christ here and our congregation knows we are strong enough to take people in and build a vibrant, loving community in our church.”

Tidball said he wants people who feel broken to come into the Hainerberg church and know they can get care, comfort and nurturing needed by the soul.

“We’re a safe haven where people can come, and we feel confident that we can do this through loving, forgiving and cherishing each other and sharing our pain,” said Tidball.

Spending a few nights in log cabins, getting to know each other and worshiping seemed to be the perfect combination for a congregation waiting to take in anyone looking for spiritual growth.